CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method of block box testing in a multi-tier application environment comprising:

dividing a multi-tier application into a plurality of tier-specific modules; and

testing each of said plurality of tier-specific modules as a black box.

2.   The method of Claim 1 wherein an output from a first tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules is used as input to a subsequent tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules.

3.   The method of Claim 2 wherein said output is stored in a computer usable media prior to use as said input.

4.   The method of Claim 2 wherein said output is stored, prior to said use as said input, for a period of time substantially greater than a time that said output is stored during use of said multi-tier application.

5.   The method of Claim 2 further comprising:

automatically comparing an output of said first tier-specific module to an input specification of said subsequent tier-specific module;

continuing said testing if said output meets said input specification; and

halting said testing if said output does not meet said input specification.

6.   The method of Claim 1 wherein at least one of said plurality of tier-specific modules is tested prior to availability of a preceding tier-specific module.

7.   The method of Claim 6 wherein simulated input is used to test said at least one of said plurality of tier-specific modules.

8.   The method of Claim 1 further comprising performing an end-to-end black box test on said multi-tier application.

9.   The method of Claim 1 wherein said multi-tier application environment comprises a utility data center.

10.   The method of Claim 1 wherein each of said plurality of tier-specific modules executes within a single tier of said multi-tier application environment.

11.   A computer readable media comprising computer usable instructions that when executed on a computer system implement a method of block box testing in a multi-tier application environment, said method comprising:

        accessing a plurality of tier-specific modules that comprise a multi-tier application; and

testing each of said plurality of tier-specific modules as a black box.

12. The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein an output from a first tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules is used as input to a subsequent tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules.

13. The computer readable media of Claim 12 wherein said output is stored in a computer usable media prior to use as said input.

14. The computer readable media of Claim 12 wherein said output is stored, prior to said use as said input, for a period of time substantially greater than a time that said output is stored during use of said multi-tier application.

15. The computer readable media of Claim 12 further comprising:

automatically comparing an output of said first tier-specific module to an input specification of said subsequent tier-specific module;

continuing said testing if said output meets said input specification; and

halting said testing if said output does not meet said input specification.

16. The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein at least one of said plurality of tier-specific modules is tested prior to availability of a preceding tier-specific module.

17.   The computer readable media of Claim 16 wherein simulated input is used to test said at least one of said plurality of tier-specific modules.

18.   The computer readable media of Claim 11 further comprising performing an end-to-end black box test on said multi-tier application.

19.   The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein said multi-tier application environment comprises a utility data center.

20.   The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein each of said plurality of tier-specific modules executes within a single tier of said multi-tier application environment.

21.   A computer usable media comprising test output from a tier-specific module, wherein said tier-specific module performs a portion of a multi-tier application.